

Week Ending Friday, April 15, 1994

**Remarks on Arrival in Kansas City,  
Missouri**

*April 7, 1994*

Thank you very much, Governor Carnahan, Mayor and Mrs. Cleaver, Mr. Holden, Speaker Griffin, and all of you. Thank you for coming out today. I didn't know there would be such a good crowd here. I'd like to stay with you longer, but I'm afraid I'll be late to the meeting if I stay too long.

I do want to say a word or two if I might. First of all, I thank you for your sentiments, and I thank the Mayor and the Governor for what they said. I've had the opportunity to come to Missouri quite a lot since I've been President, mostly because of the terrible ravages of the floods that gripped your State. I'm proud of the work that we were able to do together and proud of the response of my administration to the problems of people during that flood.

Frankly, the one thing that bothers me is that we can't have our National Government function all the time the way it did during that flood. Why does there have to be an emergency before people will stop using all the hot air and rhetoric that seems to grip Washington, put aside the special interests, talk to one another, ask what the problem is, and try to get it solved? I ran for President because that's what I wanted to do.

When I was the Governor of your neighboring State to the south, it never occurred to me that I could get by day-in and day-out just on hot air. It never occurred to me that the purpose of politics was to try to take words and push people to the furthest extreme, to the left or the right. And I ran for President because I got tired of all the rhetoric, people saying Government couldn't do anything or Government could do everything, people saying everybody out there is on their own or people saying that people had no responsibility to improve their own

lot. And I felt that if we could pull this country together and face our problems, we could go into the next century with the American dream alive and well. That's what we're trying to do, and we've made a good beginning on it.

I just want to point out that in the 15 months that I've been President, since we got our economic plan in place, trying to drive down interest rates and drive up investment, our economy has produced 2.5 million jobs, 90 percent of them in the private sector, more than were produced in the previous 4-year period. After 12 years of talking about the deficit while the national debt tripled, if the Congress adopts the budget I have given them now, we'll eliminate 100 Federal programs, cut over 200 more; have the first decrease in discretionary domestic spending since 1969; and we'll have 3 years of declining Government deficits for the first time since Harry Truman of Independence, Missouri, was President of the United States of America.

One of the things that bothers me is that sometimes I think that out here in the country, folks are worried that nothing's getting done in Washington because of what they read about in the papers. Let me tell you, we are moving more rapidly to do more things than we did even last year. The Congress is moving forward at a record pace on the budget. The Congress will take up a crime bill as soon as it comes back on Monday, which will put 100,000 police officers on the street, take assault weapons off the street; it will stiffen penalties and reduce parole for seriously dangerous repeat violent offenders; and it will give our children the means to have recreational facilities, alternatives to imprisonment for first offenses, and other things that will give them a chance to avoid the trouble that has come to so many people in the high crime areas of our country. We can do better, and we're going to with that crime bill.

We have an education bill that we just passed that, for the first time in the history of the country, provides world class standards for all of our schools and encourages grass-roots reforms to achieve them. Soon after the Congress comes back we're going to pass the school-to-work bill, which says to all the kids that don't go on to 4-year colleges, "We care about you, too; your education, your training, and your future's important. We want you to be able to get at least 2 years of further training after you leave high school."

These are the kinds of things that we're doing up there. And I came here tonight also to talk about this health care issue. Let me remind you, my fellow Americans, that health care in America costs 40 to 50 percent more of our income than it does in any other country, and yet we're the only advanced country that doesn't provide health insurance to all of our people so that all of our working people have health care security.

Let me remind you that people on welfare get health care paid for by the Government. But if someone leaves welfare and takes a minimum wage job without health insurance, then that person puts his or her family at risk. The kids don't have health insurance, and you start paying taxes for somebody who wouldn't go to work to have health care. That is crazy, and we can do better.

Let me remind you that we have 81 million Americans—81 million of us live in families where somebody's been sick, where there's been a child with diabetes, a father with a heart attack, a mother with cancer. And they have what the insurance companies call pre-existing conditions, which means that under the present system, you either pay higher insurance rates, you can't get insurance at all, or you can never change your job because if you do you lose your health insurance. No other country tolerates that. We live in a country where the average 18-year-old will change jobs eight times in a lifetime; when people in their fifties and sixties are losing their jobs, having to find new ones, and they can't get health insurance now because they're older and their rates are higher than younger people. That is wrong. We can do better. And we can do better without messing up what's good about America's health care system.

So all of my adversaries on this health care thing, I wish everybody would just tone the rhetoric down and talk about the real existence of real problems and how we can solve them. The truth is I don't want the Government to run the health care system. It's a private system; it ought to stay private. What I want is guaranteed private insurance for everybody. I want all of you to be able to choose your doctor or your health care plan, not just once but every year. More and more workers and their families are losing the right to choose their health care plan. I want to guarantee it for all Americans. And I want people to be guaranteed those benefits in the workplace, just like most of us are today. And finally, I want small business people and self-employed people to have access to the same good competitive rates that those of us in Government and big business do today. I think that is fair, reasonable, and just. And if we don't do it, we're going to continue to have serious problems in this country.

I hope you will help us provide health care security for all. We've been fooling with it for 60 years. We haven't done it yet. And what have we got to show for it? Continued problems. We can do better, and this year we're going to, with your help.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. at the Kansas City Downtown Municipal Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri; Mayor Emanuel Cleaver II of Kansas City, MO; Bob Holden, Missouri State treasurer; and Bob Griffin, speaker, Missouri House of Representatives. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **Remarks at a Rally for Health Care Reform in Minneapolis, Minnesota** *April 8, 1994*

Wow! What a crowd. Thank you for coming this morning. Thank you for supporting health care. I want to thank Mary Ellen for that wonderful speech. She really left nothing for me to say. But she and the nurses of Minnesota have my undying gratitude for this wonderful rally and for their commitment to your health care and to the future of Amer-